



*Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515*

*Anna G. Eshoo
Fourteenth District
California*

October 19, 2006

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Rice,

I'm writing to express my deepest concern about the escalating crisis facing the indigenous Christian population of Iraq.

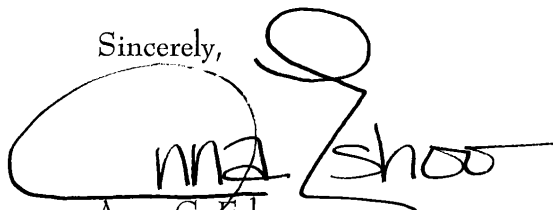
I continue to receive many troubling reports indicating that the basic development needs of Iraqi indigenous Christian communities have been hampered by misallocations of funding on the ground in Iraq and a general lack of security. Recent reports in the media have confirmed that in the three years since the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime Iraqi Christians have been a prime target of extremist violence, prompting the exodus of hundreds of thousands of native Iraqi Christians from their homes. This is a highly alarming trend, and unless action is taken now to address the pressing needs of these groups, we will likely witness the complete loss of the Iraqi indigenous Christian community, a community that has survived in the region for 2,000 years.

In July 2005, the House of Representatives sought to address these concerns by unanimously passing an amendment I offered to the *Foreign Relations Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 2006-2007*. My amendment calls on the State Department and all relevant U.S. agencies to devote special attention to the needs of indigenous Christian groups in Iraq. Since its passage I've seen little evidence to indicate progress has been made empowering this community, while I continue to hear reports of Iraqi Christians being targets of kidnappings, bombings, assassinations and other unspeakable acts of violence due to their religious practices and beliefs.

This issue is of the highest personal importance to me. If a fully functioning and sustainable democracy is to emerge in Iraq, the basic rights, needs, and security of all minority groups must be defended. I ask that you provide an update on the State Department's efforts to address the needs of the imperiled Iraqi Christian population, and urge you to devote your fullest resources toward ensuring that all individuals in Iraq, regardless of religious affiliation or ethnic background, are given the tools they need to succeed in establishing a fully-functioning and sustainable democracy.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue and I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress